

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE APPLICATION

Claims 1-70 were originally filed in the present case. Claims 1-70 were cancelled and claims 71-130 were added in a previous amendment. Claims 100, 105-109, 112, 115-120 and 122-130 were cancelled, claims 131-133 were added, and claims 71, 93, 104, 110-111 and 121 were amended in a previous amendment. Claims 71-104, 110-111, 113-114, 121 and 131-133 were cancelled, and claims 134-185 are added in a previous amendment. Claims 134-185 are cancelled, and claims 186-199 are added in the present amendment. Therefore, claims 186-199 are currently pending.

In the Office Action dated June 29, 2006, the Examiner has withdrawn a number of rejections from the previous Office Action. However, the Examiner reasserts one previous rejection, and has added one new rejection. The currently pending rejections are:

- 1) Claims 134-137, 139-141, 143-146, 148-150, 152-157, 159-165, 168, 169, 173, 175-178, 180 and 181 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Spitzer *et al.* (U.S. 3,912,666), hereinafter “Spitzer”;
- 2) Claims 182, 183-185 (previously claims 121 and 131-133), 134-137, 141, 142, 145, 146, 147, 151, 155-157, 165-169, 171-176 and 179-181 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Baker *et al.* (US 6,015,832), hereinafter “Baker”; and Boucher (US 3,968,602), hereinafter “Boucher” or Simmons *et al.* (US 5,405,602), hereinafter “Simmons”.

II. STATUS OF THE AMENDMENTS

In the present Amendment and Response to Office Action of June 29, 2006 the Applicants herein cancel claims 134-185, thereby rendering the Examiner’s rejections moot.

In the Office Action of June 29, 2006 the Examiner notes: “Claims 138, 158 and 170 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” (Office Action of June 29, 2006, page 11.) Accordingly, in the present

Amendment and Response to Office Action of June 29, 2006, the Applicants have added claims 186-199. Claim 186 is previous claim 170 written in independent form (*i.e.*, combining the elements of previous independent claim 165 with dependent claim 170). As such, per the Examiner's guidance, the claims are now in a form indicated as allowable.

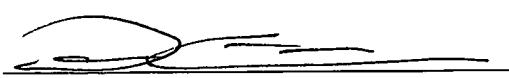
Applicants note that the amendments and cancelling of claims presented herein are made without acquiescing to the Examiner's arguments or rejections. The amendments and cancelling of the claims presented herein are made solely for the purpose of expediting the patent application process in a manner consistent with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Patent Business Goals (PBG)¹, and without waiving the right to prosecute the amended or cancelled claims (or similar claims) in the future.

¹ 65 Fed. Reg. 54603 (Sept. 8, 2000).

CONCLUSION

All grounds of rejection of the Office Action of June 29, 2006 have been addressed and reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that the Applicant's claims as amended should be passed into allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview would aid in the prosecution of this application the Applicants encourage the Examiner to call the undersigned collect at (608) 218-6900.

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